

CLAIMS

That which is claimed is:

1. A method of manufacturing a fluid-filled chamber for an article of footwear, the method comprising steps of:

positioning a parison between a first portion and a corresponding second portion of a mold;

bending the parison with contours of the mold as the first portion and the second portion translate toward each other, the contours of the mold being positioned separate from a cavity within the mold, the cavity having a shape of the chamber;

shaping opposite sides of the parison to form the chamber within the cavity; and bonding the opposite sides of the parison together.

2. The method recited in claim 1, further including a step of providing the mold such that the contours are protrusions formed on one of the first portion and the second portion, and the contours are indentations formed in the other of the first portion and the second portion, the indentations being positioned to receive the protrusions.

3. The method recited in claim 2, wherein the step of providing the mold includes locating the indentations and protrusions separate from areas of the mold that form the chamber.

4. The method recited in claim 2, wherein the step of bending the parison includes extending the parison around the protrusions and into the indentations.

5. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber to have a plurality of lobes that extend outward from a central area of the chamber.

6. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber such that at least one surface of the chamber has a curved configuration.

7. The method recited in claim 1, wherein the step of bonding includes defining a parting line between the opposite sides of the parison.
8. The method recited in claim 7, wherein the step of bonding includes extending the parting line from a first surface to an opposite second surface of the chamber.
9. The method recited in claim 7, wherein the step of bonding includes imparting a non-linear configuration to the parting line.
10. The method recited in claim 7, wherein the step of bonding includes non-centrally locating the parting line with respect to a first surface and an opposite second surface of the chamber.
11. The method recited in claim 7, wherein the step of bonding includes positioning a portion of the parting line adjacent a first surface of the chamber, positioning another portion of the parting line adjacent a second surface of the chamber, and positioning yet another portion of the parting line to extend between the first surface and the second surface.
12. A method of manufacturing a fluid-filled chamber for an article of footwear, the method comprising steps of:
 - positioning a parison between a first portion and a corresponding second portion of a mold;
 - shaping opposite sides of the parison to form the chamber within a cavity in the mold, the cavity having a shape of the chamber; and
 - bonding the opposite sides of the parison together to define a parting line, at least a portion of the parting line being non-centrally located with respect to a first surface to an opposite second surface of the chamber.
13. The method recited in claim 12, wherein the step of bonding includes imparting a non-linear configuration to the parting line.

14. The method recited in claim 12, wherein the step of bonding includes positioning a portion of the parting line adjacent the first surface of the chamber, positioning another portion of the parting line adjacent the second surface of the chamber, and positioning yet another portion of the parting line to extend between the first surface and the second surface.

15. The method recited in claim 12, further including a step of providing the mold to have protrusions formed on one of the first portion and the second portion and indentations formed in the other of the first portion and the second portion, the indentations being positioned to receive the protrusions.

16. The method recited in claim 15, wherein the step of providing the mold includes locating the indentations and protrusions separate from areas of the mold that form the chamber.

17. The method recited in claim 15, further including a step of bending the parison with the protrusions and the indentations.

18. The method recited in claim 17, wherein the step of bending the parison includes extending the parison around the protrusions and into the indentations.

19. The method recited in claim 12, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber to have a plurality of lobes that extend outward from a central area of the chamber.

20. The method recited in claim 12, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber such that at least one of the first surface and the second surface of the chamber has a curved configuration.

21. A method of manufacturing a fluid-filled chamber for an article of footwear, the method comprising steps of:

positioning a parison between a first portion and a corresponding second portion of a mold, the parison having a first side that faces the first portion and the parison having a second side that faces the second portion;

bending the parison with contours of the mold as the first portion and the second portion translate toward each other;

shaping the parison to define a first surface, a second surface, and a sidewall of the chamber, at least a first area of the sidewall being formed from the first side, the first area extending from the first surface to the second surface, and at least a second area of the sidewall being formed from the second side, the second area also extending from the first surface to the second surface; and

bonding the first side of the parison to the second side of the parison to form a parting line.

22. The method recited in claim 21, further including a step of providing the mold such that the contours are protrusions formed on one of the first portion and the second portion, and the contours are indentations formed in the other of the first portion and the second portion, the indentations being positioned to receive the protrusions.

23. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the step of providing the mold includes locating the indentations and protrusions separate from areas of the mold that form the chamber.

24. The method recited in claim 22, wherein the step of bending the parison includes extending the parison around the protrusions and into the indentations.

25. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber to have a plurality of lobes that extend outward from a central area of the chamber.

26. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber such that at least one surface of the chamber has a curved configuration.

27. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of bonding includes extending the parting line from the first surface to the second surface of the chamber.

28. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of bonding includes extending the parting line between the first area and the second area.

29. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of bonding includes imparting a non-linear configuration to the parting line.

30. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of bonding includes non-centrally locating the parting line with respect to the first surface and the second surface of the chamber.

31. The method recited in claim 21, wherein the step of bonding includes positioning a portion of the parting line adjacent the first surface of the chamber, positioning another portion of the parting line adjacent the second surface of the chamber, and positioning yet another portion of the parting line to extend between the first surface and the second surface.

32. A method of manufacturing a fluid-filled chamber for an article of footwear, the method comprising steps of:

providing a mold having a first portion and a corresponding second portion, one of the first portion and the second portion including protrusions, and the other of the first portion and the second portion including indentations that receive the protrusions, the indentations and the protrusions being located separate from areas of the mold that form the chamber;

positioning a parison between the first portion and the second portion of the mold, the parison having a first side that faces the first portion and the parison having a second side that faces the second portion;

bending the parison around the protrusions and into the indentations as the first portion and the second portion translate toward each other and contact the parison;

shaping the parison to form a first surface from the first side and a second surface from the second side, the first side and the second side being interlaced to form at least a portion of a sidewall of the chamber; and

bonding opposite sides of the parison together.

33. The method recited in claim 32, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber to have a plurality of lobes that extend outward from a central area of the chamber.
34. The method recited in claim 32, wherein the step of shaping includes forming the chamber such that at least one surface of the chamber has a curved configuration.
35. The method recited in claim 32, wherein the step of bonding includes defining a parting line between the opposite sides of the parison.
36. The method recited in claim 35, wherein the step of bonding includes extending the parting line between the interlaced first side and second side.
37. The method recited in claim 35, wherein the step of bonding includes extending the parting line from the first surface to the second surface of the chamber.
38. The method recited in claim 35, wherein the step of bonding includes imparting a non-linear configuration to the parting line.
39. The method recited in claim 35, wherein the step of bonding includes non-centrally locating the parting line with respect to the first surface and the second surface of the chamber.
40. The method recited in claim 35, wherein the step of bonding includes positioning a portion of the parting line adjacent the first surface of the chamber, positioning another portion of the parting line adjacent the second surface of the chamber, and positioning yet another portion of the parting line to extend between the first surface and the second surface.